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Mahathir-India

DR PRAISED FOR ROLE IN NATION-BUILDING

By: Mahesh Prasad

NEW DELHI, Dec 12 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who will visit India next week to receive the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding, has been commended by the Indian media as the "shining example of what a strong-willed man at the top can do for his country."

The dates for the visit have yet to be announced but official sources here said Dr Mahathir was expected to arrive on Dec 19.

The Financial Express, a business daily, said in its editorial: "Malaysia gained independence in 1957, 10 years after India. But in spite of the late start, it has outshaded India in all spheres of development. The credit for that goes solely to its Prime Minister, Mahathir bin Mohamad.

In the last 15 years, Mahathir has single-handedly transformed Malaysia, an underdeveloped society that lagged behind India, to high-tech success story."

He did so by "thinking decades ahead", the paper said. "In 1985, he embarked on the construction of the North-South Highway which was the single largest factor in turning around the country. It provided employment to 60,000 graduates and also gave a fill to the cement industry then suffering from a serious glut."

It said: "There is a lesson for Indian ministers and politicians from him. It is not enough seeking economic cooperation from Malaysia and political support from Mahathir."

It was no secret that it was largely Dr Mahathir's strong backing that made India a full dialogue partner of Asean, it said.

"Some day...sooner the better...the power that be in India should emulate Mahathir's no-nonsense ways of governance," it added.

-- BERNAMA

MP YBY